517 meal, which is taken very late, and more rarely after the meal if
521 it is to entertain a stranger. Everyone sits in a circle. Each per-
571 son takes a place in the order of his arrival, in such a way as to
533 alternate men and women. When everyone has arrived, they elect a male president and a female president, whose job is to see that the usages and customs of the ahal are respected and, as a joke, /289/ to inflict forfeits on those who bring on themselves the recriminations of the others. Sometimes only a female president is elected, but never a male president alone.

[574] The presence of several girls in a camp is often sufficient cause for organizing an ahal mixed with asri. The young men come from neighboring camps, always dressed in their dressy clothes. Some of them sometimes come hundreds of kilometers to attend a meeting where they know they will find pretty girls and pleasant distraction. Then one of those present plays the violin. The sourish, plaintive, monotonous sounds which come out of it are quite in harmony with the wild setting made by nature and man. The men accentuate the rhythm by singing "ho ho" on the beat and finally by a hummed accompaniment. And every-
• [538 one jokes and tells broad stories, for the poetic part is often of a
522] very doubtful quality, if not made up of more or less vulgar repartee.

Then the violin is silent, and laughter bursts out on all sides.
[832] Men and women make very free contacts and rub noses which is the peculiar form of the Tuareg kiss. These meetings end very late at night, and everyone returns to his camp, not, however, without having made an appointment by a special language of hand gestures to finish these amorous love feasts in a more intimate way.

836 The mores of the girls are indeed very licentious, so much so that Father de Foucault stated that the word "virginity" did not exit in Tamashek. (1) "There is no question of keeping the girl

1. Dr. Vermale, Au Sahara pendant la guerre européenne /In the Sahara During the European War/, p. 172.

5: Nicolaisen E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1959
MS25 Tuareg MS25

114 174 233 valeur d'immenses territoires inutilisés" (Gautier 1942, p. 209f.). 2) "Il est donc légitime d'associer le nom des Zenata à la grande révolution politique et sociale qu'a entraînée au Maghreb l'apparition du chameau. Zénète et chameau apparaissent en même temps, et tout se passe comme s'ils apparaissaient l'un portant l'autre" (Gautier 1942, p. 227). 3) "En effet, quoique Ibn Khaldoun et d'ailleurs tous les historiens arabes nous signalent les Zenata dès le début de la conquête arabe, il semble qu'au VII[e] siècle les Zenata n'aient pas été encore, aussi exclusivement que plus tard, les représentants du grand nomadisme" (Gautier 1942, p. 227).

Gautier says about the Tuareg: "Ces gens-là sont de grands nomades chameliers; dans nulle autre tribu ce caractère n'est aussi marqué et c'est cela même qui fait leur originalité" (Gautier 1942, p. 240). Most Arab historians confirm that the 175 Tuareg are in particular camel-breeders, and the Tuareg do not belong to the 101 Zenata group. According to Ibn Khaldoun the Berbers fall into two great divisions: 233 1) The *Botr* descending from *Madghis-Ibn-Berr*, and comprising the Zenata group and several other tribes. 2) The *Beranes* descending from *Bernes-Ibn-Berr*. Several Berber tribes and among them most Tuareg belong to this division (Ibn Khaldoun I, p. 168ff.).

It is interesting that Tuareg camels are frequently referred to in Arab literature 175 as being of a particular light and slender breed extremely well fitted for riding 233 (Ibn Khaldoun II, p. 70, 105. – Edrisi p. 11, 67f., 144f. – Leo Africanus p. 940f.). To-day there is a marked distinction between the camels of the north found mainly 171 among Arabs, and the camels of the south among the Tuareg. The Arab camel is 233 heavily built and particularly fitted for luggage, and the Tuareg say it is also superior as a milk-producer. It has a thick covering of wool around the hump and on the forepart of the body. The southern camel as found among the Tuareg is very different. It has a slender built, short hair, and is particularly fitted for riding as mentioned by the ancient Arab authors. These two different camel-breeds apparently exist all over Northern Africa from the Red Sea to the Atlantic, and the heavy and woolly type seems to be characteristic of Arabs (cf. Nachtigal 1879, I, p. 415f. – Murray 1935, p. 92ff. – Cauvet 1925–26, I, p. 79ff.), who are also the [177] true black-tent dwellers. It is possible that the Arabs have introduced the black [342] tent into Northern Africa together with a particular breed of camel, while another breed was introduced before the Arabs.

The cultural position of camel-breeding has never been thoroughly studied. As I have pointed out elsewhere (Nicolaisen 1959a), it is peculiar that so many customs connected with camels are also typical of cow-breeding of the East African cattle complex (cf. Baumann 1940. – Herskovits 1926. – Kroll 1928). The common [462] traits seem to be the following:- 1) All work connected with camels and oxen is [825] done by men. 2) Camels and oxen have important social functions and their breeders take an interest in these animals beyond their practical importance. Both [538] camels and oxen play an important part in poetry, which is frequently characterised by a tendency towards identification between man and beast (cf. Evans Pritchard 1940. – Foucauld 1925-30, I-II).

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

Fig. 82b. Cf. text Fig. 82a.

qualities as strength and speed, but rather on elegance and sublimity. The riders sit straight in the saddles without watching the crowd of women, and the camels are ridden at a gentle trot (generally that known as *senat-senat*; cf. p. 99) with their heads drawn back. In this way the men may also ride their animals round the women in a circle as I have seen in Ayr (cf. Fig. 82).

Camels have important social functions among the Tuareg who take an interest in these animals far beyond their practical value. It may perhaps be useful to compare Tuareg interest in camels with Nuer interest in cattle so brilliantly described by Evans-Pritchard. Nuer caress their animals, and there is a tendency for human beings and cattle to form, so to speak, a single community (Evans-Pritchard 1940, p. 16–50). This is not exactly true of Tuareg and camels. The Tuareg do not pat their camels which will not respond to caressing, and they do not live in very close contact with their animals, most of which frequently graze far away from the camp under the supervision of one or two herdsmen. But the Tuareg nevertheless have much the same feeling towards camels as Nuer have towards their cattle. They are very fond of their animals. They may abstain from camel's flesh because they are fond of camels and would feel very sick at heart when eating them. But though the Tuareg are fond of camels as such, they are delighted particularly at the sight of a very fine camel (*akemhur*; Ahaggar) and may even speak disparagingly of a badly built animal (*amugey*; Ahaggar). Fine camels add to the prestige of a man, while too many animals of poor build may even harm his reputation. When girls and young women praise camel-riders in their songs they praise those mounted on fine and richly-decorated animals. When camels are mentioned in poetry this may also be done as praise to their owners, as in a poem composed in honour of noble Tuareg of the *Uraɣen* (*Kel Ajjer*) of whom it is said that "their pack-camels have feet as large as a drum, and the loads they carry are like the crests of mountains" (Hanoteau 1896, p. 218). Such reference to pack-camels, however, seems to be rare in Tuareg poetry, while riding camels are frequently mentioned in connection with warfare and love. Riding camels have much the same esteemed position as had horses in Medieval Europe. Tuareg interest in camels is particularly focused on riding camels and there is a tendency towards identification